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FM AMCONSUL JEDDAH

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0746

INFO RUEHZM/GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUCNISL/ISLAMIC COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 JEDDAH 000254

SIPDIS

RIYADH, PLEASE PASS TO DHAHREN; DEPARTMENT FOR NEA/ARP

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/09/2018

TAGS: PGOV SOCI KISL SA

SUBJECT: MOSQUE SERMONS FOR SAUDI ARABIA APRIL 11, 18, AND  
25: EASTERN PROVINCE, MECCA, AND MEDINA

Classified By: Acting Consul General CB Toney for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) BEGIN SUMMARY: In the Eastern Province on April 11, a substitute Imam at the Omar bin Abd al-Aziz Grand Mosque focused his sermon on justice, equality, and the increase in the price of oil in the past few years. The following week during the April 18 sermon, the Imam discussed prayer as one of the key fundamentals of Islam, and on April 25, the topic was life after death.

¶2. (U) At the Mecca Grand Mosque, Sheikh Dr. Sa'ud al-Shuraym on April 11 urged Muslims to emulate the Prophet Muhammad, and on April 18, emphasized that slavery belonged to God alone and stated that those who desire a religion other than Islam will be lost. Sheikh Usama Bin-Abdallah Khayyat on April 25 spoke on Muslims' familial responsibilities. In Medina, the April 11 and 18 sermons covered similar topics while the April 25 sermon featured a call on Muslims to perform honest work and to avoid cheating, embezzlement, and procrastination. END SUMMARY.

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EASTERN PROVINCE  
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ENCOURAGES MUSLIMS TO FOLLOW THE SAYINGS AND DEEDS OF MUHAMMAD

¶3. (C) On April 11 a substitute Imam (in the absence of Sheikh al-Munajjid) at the Omar bin Abd al-Aziz Grand Mosque focused his sermon on justice, equality, and price increases of the past 1-2 years. He urged Muslims to follow the "Sunna" (the sayings and deeds of Muhammad) by practicing God's teachings and setting good examples. He added that equality, fairness, and honesty are part of a Muslim's religious duties and stated that "justice" was the "key" to Heaven.

FOCUSSES ON PRAYERS AS A "PILLAR OF ISLAM"

¶4. (C) Another substitute Imam on April 18 spoke extensively about prayers, as prayer is one of the five pillars of Islam.

(NOTE: Muslims consider the five pillars of Islam the basis of the religion and include: prayer, fasting during the month of Ramadan, profession of faith, alms giving, and pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca. END NOTE.) The Imam called on Muslims to focus on their actions as well as the Koranic passages they recite while performing their prayers. He also criticized those who perform prayers "robot-like," going through the motions mechanically "while day-dreaming," describing such conduct as "unbecoming" of good Muslims. He added that those who ignore the daily calls to prayer run the risk of being condemned to hell.

SPEAKS ON THE PATH TO HEAVEN

¶5. (C) On April 25, the Imam spoke on life after death. He

explained that two angels monitor people's daily performance and that they have the responsibility for tracking everything people say and do. He said the best way to live life is to treat everything as "temporary and transitory." Referring to those who believe they have been wronged or oppressed, he said that God will reward them for their suffering either in this life or the next. He encouraged Muslims to work hard in order to earn God's pleasure for he alone "holds the keys to Heaven."

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MECCA  
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#### URGES MUSLIMS TO FOLLOW THE TRADITIONS OF MUHAMMAD

¶ 16. (U) At the Mecca Grand Mosque on April 11, Sheikh Salih Al Talib discussed the qualities of the Prophet Muhammad. The Imam quoted Koranic verses as well as statements by some of Muhammad's companions and narrators of Muhammad's sayings in which they spoke about his character. He then encouraged Muslims to follow his tradition.

#### STATES SLAVERY ALONE BELONGS TO GOD

¶ 17. (U) Sheikh Dr. Sa'ud al-Shuraym on April 18 focused his sermon on slavery and stated that it "should only be to Him and not to any other one." Al-Shuraym added: "Consequently, slavery will not take its right position except through obedience, rightness, and adherence to the right path so that justice and faith in God prevail." He continued: "Slavery is religion, and religion for God is Islam." He then quotes a

JEDDAH 00000254 002 OF 002

Koranic verse (The Family of Imran, 3:85): "If anyone desires a religion other than Islam never will it be accepted of him; and in the Hereafter he will be in the ranks of those who have lost."

#### HIGHLIGHTS MUSLIMS' FAMILIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

¶ 18. (U) On April 25 Sheikh Usama Bin-Abdallah Khayyat discussed the responsibilities of Muslims in society. He said that every Muslim is responsible for his family and that he can express this by "reforming and educating them and ordering them to enjoin what is right and to forbid what is wrong." The preacher also urged parents to watch their children and to observe which web sites they access on the Internet. Regarding the responsibilities of the wife, the Imam said that "It is to safeguard the house of her husband and to take care of her children...."

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MEDINA  
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#### WARNS AGAINST DEVIATING FROM "THE RIGHT PATH"

¶ 19. (U) On April 11 at the Medina Grand Mosque, Sheikh Abd-al-Muhsin Al Qasim warned Muslims against Satan's continued attempts to persuade them to deviate from "the right path." He added that fortunately, God provided humans with servants to help discern what is right and to encourage them to do good deeds. The following week on April 18, he urged Muslims to rely on God and to accept "what he ordained for them."

#### CALLS ON MUSLIMS TO PERFORM HONEST WORK

¶ 10. (U) Sheikh Salah al-Budayr on April 25 spoke on the importance of mastering one's work and working toward possessing the skills to do so. He added that one should perform their work on time, otherwise they should not receive pay until completion. He also said that one should not sign a contract to perform work unless they are sure they are sufficiently qualified. He then criticized those who falsely

claim they are skilled, which he said results in "painful tragedies" and "horrible material damage." He concluded by calling on Muslims to avoid "dishonesty, the breaking of promises, procrastination, cheating, embezzlement, and the lessening of the value of people's rights."

TONEY